UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.3/51/L.12
5 November 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-first session
THIRD COMMITTEE
Agenda item 105

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine: draft resolution

Follow-up to the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 48/113 of 20 December 1993, 49/173 of 23 December 1994 and, in particular, 50/151 of 21 December 1995, in which it requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in close consultation with concerned States and in coordination with relevant intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations, to convene in 1996 a regional conference to address the problems of refugees, displaced persons, other forms of involuntary displacement and returnees in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and relevant neighbouring States,

Taking note with satisfaction of the successful conclusion of the Conference held at Geneva on 30 and 31 May 1996,

Being aware that involuntary, mass displacement, in addition to the human suffering involved, imposes significant economic and social burdens and may affect security and stability at the regional level,

Reaffirming the view of the Conference that, while the primary responsibility for tackling population displacement problem lies with the

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affected countries themselves, the serious challenges cannot be met by the limited resources and experience of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States individually,

Mindful that effective implementation of the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference 1/ can be ensured only through coordinated activities undertaken in this respect by all participating States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other actors,

Welcoming the spirit of international solidarity and cooperation that made the preparatory process of the Conference and the Conference itself a success,

Noting the 1951 Convention 2/ and the 1967 Protocol 3/ relating to the Status of Refugees,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General; 4/

2. Expresses its gratitude to the Government of Switzerland and other host States that made it possible to convene the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States and a series of preparatory meetings, as well as those States that made voluntary contributions for this purpose;

3. Endorses the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference on 31 May 1996; 1/

4. Welcomes the innovative approach and close cooperation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in initiating and supporting a multilateral constructive dialogue among a wide range of countries concerned that has brought agreement on guidelines for practical action, taking into account internationally recognized norms and standards;

5. Expresses its satisfaction with the work of the Conference, which laid down a solid foundation for further action by the countries concerned and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

6. Confirms the views of the Conference on the urgency of addressing the problems of those displaced, of implementing measures to prevent situations leading to further involuntary population displacement and of effectively managing other types of migratory flows in the region;

1/ A/51/341, annex.

2/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545.

3/ Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

4/ A/51/341.

7. Urges all States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned to take further action with a view to the full implementation of the recommendations of the Conference;

8. Calls upon the Governments of the countries concerned to continue to strengthen their commitment to the principles underpinning the Programme of Action and to ensuring progress in its implementation;

9. Recognizes that implementation of the Programme of Action requires additional financial resources, and calls for effective international cooperation in order to assist the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the field of migration and related matters;

10. Welcomes the readiness of States and interested international organizations to provide appropriate forms and levels of support for the practical implementation of the Programme of Action in the spirit of solidarity and burden-sharing;

11. Invites international financial and other institutions to contribute to financing projects and programmes within the framework of the implementation of the Programme of Action;

12. Requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to steer, in close coordination, the ongoing and future activities required to ensure progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action;

13. Calls upon all relevant United Nations organs, bodies and agencies to promote, within their respective mandates, the implementation of the Programme of Action;

14. Recognizes the role to be played by non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Programme of Action and encourages the Governments of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and international organizations to strengthen their cooperation with non-governmental organizations and to involve them actively in the Conference follow-up;

15. Reaffirms the necessity to put in place an effective follow-up mechanism of the Conference;

16. Greatly appreciates the initial steps undertaken by the High Commissioner in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration to promote the implementation of the Programme of Action;

17. Welcomes the Joint Operational Strategy of the High Commissioner and the International Organization for Migration in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States for 1996-2000, which outlines the practical dimensions of implementing the results of the Conference;

18. Emphasizes the necessity to fulfil the recommendations of the Programme of Action relating to ensuring respect for human rights as an

important factor in the management of migration flows, the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and stability;

19. Urges the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to include key elements of the Programme of Action in current and future projects of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States;

20. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the measures taken and proposed and of progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution;

21. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session an item entitled "Follow-up to the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States".